

Interview H0206 : with Lungshar, Chanju [lung shar byang 'chub], (India, 1981) : Part No. 2 of 3

The interviewee was a lay official in the traditional Tibetan government and the son of the famous Tsipa Lungshar. He continues his discussion from H.0206.01 about his famous father Tsipa Lungshar and the events surrounding the death of the 13th Dalai Lama in 1933.

[continued from H.0206.01] So Kujar took advantage of this incident and said the Jigyab khenpo is not only an important tsidrun, but he is also the overall person in charge of the tsidrun so an act of disrespect such as this incident is not at all tolerable. Then one day in Norbulinga my father was terminated from the post of Advisor of the Commander in Chief [tib. dmag spyi 'tsho 'dzin]. After that, my father returned to Lhasa at about 3 P.M, without his yellow satin official uniform. He was wearing the tsechuma [tib. tshal phyu ma], a chuba with openings on both sides. So Lhajam (Lady) [tib. lha lcam] Lhalu started crying and asked what happened? He told her that you are a Lhajam and do not know anything about such things, so do not worry.

At about that time, maybe 4 P.M, while we were enjoying the afternoon English-style tea as usual, a chibyog arrived with a message on a samtra from the Dalai Lama [tib. bka' sam] which said, "It has become necessary for me to act in this manner, but you should not be demoralized. Whatever desires you have, if you desire a position higher than that you were holding, I will be more than happy to grant it to you. Moreover, only your magji position is terminated. Your responsibility in the tsikhang is still with you, so carry out the duties there as usual".

In that samtra some other important matters were mentioned, but I do not know about them. After that, my father told the Dalai Lama, "Actually the post of Tshipön is very important as it is the head of the 175 lay officials. And not only did they remove my uniform, they also removed my hat insignia [tib. tog zhwa]. This was illegal and from now on if they carry out such illegal activities it will be very difficult for me to continue as a government servant. Consequently, I desire to resign, not only from my position, but also from government service. I will send my formal resignation to the Kashag. As far as

I am concerned, I have worked hard. Through the kindness of the Dalai Lama, I have quite good property and probably many people are very unhappy about this. So I will be presenting everything as in the saying in Tibetan, "We not only give you the flowers but also the green pasture together" [tib. spang me chabs cig]. After that, I intend to go to a small retreat/hermitage and devote the rest of my life to the practice of the dharma. As far as my family and children are concerned, I request that Your Holiness protect them and help them." That is what he said. Actually, they were not allowed to remove the yellow satin with the dragon design uniform [tib. mdzod gos] and the hat [tib. lcags mda']. To this, the Dalai Lama replied, "I have given separate orders through the drönyerchemmo regarding this. Your official uniform and the hat crest should not have been removed, so, as usual, you should continue to occupy the Tspön position. You should carry out your duties normally without feeling demoralized."

Then just before the Dalai Lama's visit to Reting monastery, my father received another personal samtra in which the Dalai Lama insisted that he wanted to appoint him as a Shape and told him to accept the appointment without further excuses. He replied that since I could not fulfill the position as Advisor of the Commander in Chief, how could I be able to carry out the duties of a Shape? So please allow me to resign completely from both my position and from the government service itself. If this is not acceptable, then please allow me to carry out my duties at the present rank and position. As far as the position of Shape is concerned, there are many others who are much more intelligent than me and more capable." So such a reply was given by my father. In my personal opinion, this was a mistake because the Dalai Lama is not an ordinary man, he is a Bodhisattva so his understanding differs tremendously from that of ordinary people.

When the Dalai Lama returned from his visit to Reting, my father was very sick and the family submitted a request to the Dalai Lama to do divination to determine what rituals should be performed for his quick recovery. They also requested that he pray for him. The Dalai Lama replied, "It is possible that you will be with me inseparably for all rebirths and lives, sometimes as king and minister and sometimes as lama and disciple. I will keep you in my prayers and I will definitely give my protection. However, no rituals should be performed and you should not worry about your children. Any difficulties your children ever face, the government will look after them so you can talk accordingly." [tib. nyid rang skye ba tshe rabs kun tu nga dang 'bral med 'grogs srid pa skabs re rgyal blon nam skabs re bla slob kyi tshul du 'grog srid pas rjes 'dzin skyabs 'jug nges par yong 'gro zhing/ rjes shul bu phrug rnams la sems ngal nam yang ma dgos pa slad dka' ngal byung rim gzhung gnas

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nas lta rtog nges par gnang rgyu yin pas sems khral nam yang mi dgos pa 'di thog nas mol 'thus chog pa].

This reply was written by the Dalai Lama himself in red ink above the request asking him for his divination. I saw it later with my own eyes. Even my brother Sawangchemmo [Lhalu] considered this as one of the most important documents that we possess since it allows us to make certain claims on the government if we encounter hardships. Then, my father's illness deteriorated day by day. About that time, Lhalu Lhajam and my mother discussed this and said we cannot afford to let him die so it is better if we do all we can to save him. So they went to many well known Lamas like the Ganden Tripa [tib. dga' ldan khri pa] and particularly to Trehor Trisur [tib. tre hor khri zur] who was an Ex-Ganden Tripa. Both ladies prostrated there many times and sought his protection and finally he asked what did Dalai Lama say. They told him how we made requests to the Dalai Lama many times, but he gave us no rituals to be performed. Then he said in I cannot do anything, but I can pray for him.

They went more than once to him [Trehor Trisur] but he did not agree. Then finally after many visits at which they insisted and prostrated before him, he said, "Well, if you people insist so much now I, an old monk, might have to do something that Avaloketisvara [the Dalai Lama] who can see the past, present and future told you not to do. I will perform a ritual which will overcome this hindrance to his life, but later what will happen I do not know." So all the family members completed all the rituals and thereafter he started getting better day by day.

Then another divination request was sent to the Dalai Lama in which they mentioned that according to what Trehor Trisur told them we have performed rituals and now he is getting better. However, even now, in order to get completely recovered and live perfectly, please tell us if anything else can be done for the safety of his life. To that, the Dalai Lama replied, "After completion of the ritual decreed by Trehor Trisur, now it seems there is no hindrance to his life. However, in the future, most likely he will have a very bad eye disease so one has to be very careful about that."

At that time, while he was getting better, there was a problem at the Military Headquarters concerning Tashilhunpo. The representatives of Tashilhunpo such as Ashang Nabum [tib. a zhang brnag bum] etc., came to Norbulinga and had many meetings. They had many discussions with the Kashag and also with the Tsondu hragdu and the Tsondu gyendzom. They even held meetings for three days, but still couldn't reach a decisive answer.

Finally, they sent the famous Trunyichemmo Dombo [tib. gdong por] at night to seek advice from my father who was ill. My father gave answers to the first and the second questions and explained everything to him. He went back and started giving the answers to the Tashilhunpo people, but that also did not work well. So the Dalai Lama decided to visit my father for a discussion. My father asked the Dalai Lama to please not visit my house. If you want my help, I will come to the palace. Whatever things that may be required, I will be able to do. Then the Dalai Lama said that he will send his car to pick him up, to which my father said, "No." If I go and sit in Dalai Lama's personal car, what little merit I have will be washed away." So finally he went on horseback and that time he was not all well. So people were holding him on the horse, but when he reached the main road towards Norbulinga, at the bridge known as the Changgo [tib. chab sgo] Bridge, he said that I do not need to be held and he was going as usual because we may meet those Tashilhunpo people here or people will hear of this, so I am going. He had that kind of courage.

When he reached the Norbulinga gate, normally, an official of the rank of Tsipön had to dismount from his horse near the first gate, but that day special orders had been issued and he was allowed to ride on the horseback straight up to the palace where normally only the silön could dismount. When he reached Norbulinga, he immediately proceeded to the hall named Shabten Lhakhang [tib. zhabs brtan lha khang] where the venue of the meeting was to be. So there he talked a little bit with the Trungtsi and then the meeting started. The representatives of Tashilhunpo had many problems and complaints against the government and he answered each and every question and clarified all the different matters that they raised. For all my father's answers, the Tashilhunpo representatives asked for documentary evidence, for which my father said that these documents are lying in the Yigtsang office and the file numbers are so and so. When they asked him to produce the proof, he immediately provided it. Then the meeting was concluded and he went to the Dalai Lama to report on the matter. The Dalai Lama had made arrangements for a doctor and even soup, etc. for him. Then the Dalai Lama asked him to go back to his house in his own palanquin if you do not want to go in my car. He insisted. My father said, "If I sit in the palanquin of the Dalai Lama who is Avaloketisvara, it is not good for me." Again the Dalai Lama said, "I have given permission and even the man in charge of the palanquin service will also sit with you." "It is a different matter," my father said. So finally he went back on horseback. Gradually he got better and completely recovered from the illness.

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When the Dalai Lama told him that he will have a very severe eye disease, he took it as an ordinary eye sickness and he ordered many eye lotions from Germany, Japan and England. I have seen with my own eyes the boxes of eye ointments. So he did not know that later his eye-balls would be gouged out. This is one of the mistakes he committed.

Not very long after that, about a year or so, the Dalai Lama passed away. Before that, he sent a samtra message that said, "Silön Langdün is young and unable to carry out the responsibilities, so we need someone who is intelligent and capable of executing responsibilities jointly with the young silön." So he planned to appoint Lungshar to the post and said he must accept this responsibility. To that, my father insisted that he would not like to take such a position, but whatever service he was required to render, he will render it. Although the Dalai Lama had said this time that you should not reject this, even then my father insisted. Then one day, while meeting with the Dalai Lama in his room, he also gave him 3 gold coins. Still, whatever may be, he did not listen. My own observation is that there was a vast difference between him, the enlightened one, and ordinary people. He foresaw things that we cannot grasp. If my father had accepted this post, maybe things would have turned out differently.

My father's view was that he would like to establish a democratic type of government, but such a democracy could not be set-up if he took a higher rank. The position of Tsipön was the right position for him because the Trungtsi were the persons in charge or rather they were the controllers of the Tsondu, whether it was the hragdu or the hragdu gyepa. So he thought that it was the right position from which to enact change through the Tsondu itself, because as we know, the Tsondu gyendzom's decisions could not be changed by any one. However, if he went beyond his current rank, for example to become a shape or silön, he would have nothing to do with the Tsondu gyendzom. At that time, when democracy was being considered, people thought it was [bad] like a ghost. They considered that democracy, if introduced, would be the worst thing to happen. Even later, when the government's verdict was issued, it was clearly mentioned that you are trying to spread the system of the Red Russians.

Q

What proof do you have that your father only wanted to bring democratic changes in Tibet?

A

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There are many reasons. First, he was in London for a long time and studied democratic systems of government there. After returning to Tibet, he reported to the 13th Dalai Lama telling him, "According to the Dalai Lama's orders, I have been thinking day and night about the methods needed to have Buddhism flourish and the government's political situation become good and our land become prosperous. I feel this was my responsibility and I concluded that the present system should be changed. That change cannot be done drastically in Tibet, but it must be changed slowly. To carry out all these changes, he gave his plans [Lungshar's plans] to the Dalai Lama and the Dalai Lama gave him 100% support. The content of the draft plan was that if we didn't change, the peace and prosperity of our country would not remain for long. Though I cannot prophesize like a Lama, I can sign here and say that unless a change is brought about in our system, the country shall not survive for long in peace.

So, the Dalai Lama agreed to execute his plans. For the first step, he sent Lunghar to Tashilhunpo because Tashilhunpo was the largest estate holder in Tibet so that should be where he carried out his land enumeration and new tax collection program called babshi. In the past in the Tsang area there had been many land enumerations [tib. zhib zhung] such as the Iron-Tiger Year Land enumeration and the "Wood Year Enumeration [tib. shing zhib ma bu]. As far as Tibet was concerned, the largest estate holders were the government, the aristocracy and the monastic segment [tib. gzhung sger chos gsum]. Among them, the largest was the monastery sector which included monasteries and individual labrang. Among these, Tashilhunpo was one of the largest land holders so my father decided to confront them first. If he could succeed with them, then the others would fall into place automatically. That was my father's idea.

However, later when Tashilhunpo opposed him, they called him Trungtsi Langdrül Gochen [tib. drung rtsis glang sbrul mgo chen] meaning the Trungtsi were like oxen and snakes with the big heads. Regarding this, the 13th Dalai Lama clarified it in his proclamation by saying that it was not like that. He [Lungshar] did that according to what I said. I do not remember what he said exactly, but I think it was 13 or 17 points. Regarding this, the late lay official Dingyön [tib. lding yon lags] could recite it like reciting a mantra. Even after he came to India, he would recite it all the time.

Then 13th Dalai Lama passed away and after that the Tsondu gyendzom had to meet and the problems of Kujar arose. For example, the Tsondu asked Kujar, "How could the Dalai Lama die before we knew that he was ill?" The State Oracle named Gowochöje, [tib. go bo chos rje] had come into trance and offered the Dalai Lama the medicines named

Chamjom Pawojubshi [tib. 'cham 'joms dpa' bo bcu bzhi] and Chogleg drugden [tib.?]. The Dalai Lama, however, insisted that he did not want them, but the medicines were forced on him. This caused a lot of talk in my home which I remember. Then they convened the Tsondu gyendzom and my father, of course, was the top and strongest person in the meeting. Then Kujar was punished and Silön Langdün needed an assistant. Everybody said that Lungshar was the only person who could fit that position. This was decided unanimously, but father insisted that this was a mistake and that the helper of the silön should be an incarnate Lama. Tibet has always had incarnate lamas as Regents. Now that the Dalai Lama was not alive we must have a lama--an incarnate lama as Regent. So this was how my father stopped the voice of the Tsondu. So my father naturally thought Reting was the most suitable and he liked it. Though it actually went through the senriy lottery, it was my father who very strongly recommended and pushed Reting's name as a candidate.

Thereafter a revolutionary organization known as 'Kyichok Kündü' [tib. skyid phyogs kun 'dus] was established. 107 government officers joined it and they unanimously requested that my father be the head of this organization. My father told them that while Dalai Lama was alive I presented a proposal for the same goals and got 100% support from the Dalai Lama. However, strong objections had come from religious side and also from aristocrats who were stubbornly holding old thoughts [tib. klad rnying mkhregs bzung]. People considered change as something bad like falling into hell. This was due to short-sightedness. If we try to do something now, there will be no result because the time has not yet ripened. I do not want to take the responsibility of a revolutionary organization.

At that time, the Gung of Janglojen, [tib. lcang lo can] and others were there [in the group] and they insisted that my father take the responsibility because he had been holding the greater responsibilities in the past. Now, at this juncture, if he did not take responsibility, we would all be left like a motherless baby. Therefore, they insisted that he must take responsibility. My father, however, further insisted by saying that revolution can be started in 2 ways. First, it should come very strong with force, the force generated by the spirit of the revolution itself. The other way was gradually through peace. It seems that it will be difficult to bring peaceful change here. So you people go ahead and do whatever is necessary and later I will gradually give you support. Just now, if I join, it is not good. They still insisted and finally my father agreed [... unclear] But, it may help to some extent, so one has to give up one's own interest, but please be careful and no one should do any wild activity. Then they agreed to carry out the work steadily and carefully in a manner that suited the time [tib. bab brling brtan gsum].

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So, day by day, the talk was spreading wider and wider and larger and larger. Since my father was the man who tried to bring Reting Rinpoche to power, Reting told my father that there was wild talk going on so it is not possible to cooperate with you on such things and I hope you will not involve yourself in that activity. And even if you involve yourself, please do not send any petitions, etc, because if you do send it, then it will be very difficult in the future, so please be careful. So my father urged the others to be careful and act in keeping with the times. After some time, Kapshöba came in the evening and told my father "You were very kind to me, more kind than my parents, so I, Kapshöba, am in my position today only due to your kindness, so I want to give you a hint that the authorities have come to have big doubts about you regarding the activities of Kyichok Kündü. As far as I am concerned, I totally depend on you with my body, mind and spirit so do not have doubt about me at all. I want you to swear today that you have no doubts, suspicions and mistrust about me. Then my father told him, "There is no need to swear. If you have done nothing wrong, why should I doubt you." Then he [Kapshöba] said that is not sufficient. I want you to swear. My father said he has never has sworn [taken an oath] throughout his whole life, but even then, Kapshöba insisted and said if you swear I will have confidence, but if you do not swear, I will not have confidence.

So one morning at 9 A.M. my father sent a messenger who was capable of convincing the others to the members of Kyichok Kündü and asked them not to submit any petition to the government. You can do any work, anything, but do not submit a petition. But by that time they said the petition had already been sent. So he immediately sent someone to stop the petition, but when they reached the Kashag the petition was already submitted.

Q

What petition?

A

The theme of the petition was to express the desire to bring revolutionary changes. It was mentioned that until the 14th Dalai Lama comes to power [the part below in double brackets is not on the tape but is from the subject off tape] [[all the important matters should be decided by the Tsondu only and not by others. It was similar to that of a democratic system. At the same time, the changing, re-appointing and termination of services of important positions in the government should also be done by the Tsondu. When the petition was presented to the Kashag, they made arrangements about how to

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punish us. Somewhere around this time, Shape Trimön went to Drepung. We received a message that some people said that he [his father] had to be very careful because Trimön had already left. Our relations and family members said that it is dangerous now as the Dalai Lama has already passed away and we are very well-to-do and have very large estate holdings, so for the sake of the children, if we still remain here it will be very, very dangerous. So now if you stay like this, this will create a tremendous problem.

The Nepalese Representative had asked him to come and stay in the Nepalese High Commission for protection. He said that he will not hand him [Lungshar] over. Then Drepung and Sera also asked him to come and stay in their monasteries. It was karma that no one could persuade him. He remained in our house. Not only that, after the death of 13th Dalai Lama, many extraordinary lamas had told my father not to remain here now. They said, "You should proceed to Nepal and later you can return."]] If he returned afterwards, he would be very successful. This had been received by him through a messenger from a very far distance, like Nangchen. It was sent by Khentrü Künsang Dechen [tib. mkhan sprul kun bzang bde chen] through a special messenger [to Lungshar] .

About the [Lungshar's] spiritual side, I have received questions. One had 7 points and another had 10 points. They said, Lungshar had no interest at all towards the spiritual side, but this was not true. He wanted to bring Revolutionary Democratic change in Tibet so his name was very strongly seen as a political leader, but that does not mean that he had no interest, did not practice and had no faith in the dharma. So the foreigners themselves thought he was an anti-religious person. That picture was of course built up, but it was not true. He was very much a religious person.

Q

Wasn't your father supposed to be an incarnate Lama?

A

There is no point telling that story now. As my father said, one day there was a very important meeting in the Potala and my father was invited. Then everybody said that this meeting was just meant to deceive you, so do not attend the meeting. Normally, wherever my father stayed, either in the Lhalu house or Shöl, we had a lot of young men who acted as guards [tib. a phrug] with us so no one could do anything to him. But he went that day and when he was coming down a little bit he was chased by one of the Simgag, [tib. gzim

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'gag], the tsidrung bodyguards of the ruler. So the volunteer guards of my father almost started shooting, but father did not allow that. Then his guards said if we do not shoot now, it is not possible to carry on. Even then, he insisted not to shoot so he had to go back. After going back, he never returned properly.

Q

Wasn't there a confrontation between Kapshöba and your father in front of the Enquiry Commission, [tib. zhu gtugs]?

A

Yes.

Q

On what point?

A

Well, no point. It was all a show, [tib. phyag rgya].

Q

What did Kapshöba say? What were his complaints?

A

I do not know what his complaints were. I never heard. Anyway, the investigators were Jangra [tib. lchang ra], the depön of the Gusung Regiment, Tempa Jayan [tib. bstan pa 'jam dbyangs], the one who later became a Shape--he was my maternal uncle, and Dombo, one of the Trunyichemmo. So there were 4 people who were members of the committee that investigated this. I do not know in detail about these things, but it was known to my brother, Lhalu, who was old enough at that time. However, he never told me anything.

Q

What was the judgment for your father?

A

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It was the worst judgment they could ever pass. It was on the 7th day of the 4th month of the Tibetan Calendar that the judgment order was issued. The representatives of Sera and Drepung like Sog depa [tib. sog sde pa] and Chamsur [tib. byams zur] had called 1,000 dobdo. They wanted to forcibly take my father out, but people advised them not to so they could not put their plan into action. So he got the punishment order.

Q

Do you remember the punishment or judgment given by the then Regent, Reting Rinpoche?

A

It was not made by Reting Rinpoche. It was prepared by the Kashag and approved by Silön Langdün. Reting Rinpoche was given the proposal, but he did not approve it saying that I am a gelong so I cannot approve this. That was his mistake. He should have said I do not approve it at all. Instead, he simply said I cannot do it because I am a gelong. That was because he was a new Regent and did not have any experience in political life so they took advantage of the Regent's excuses and got approval from the Silön. Finally, he destroyed the person who made him the Silön and Regent both. [not clear]

Q

How long did he remain after getting his eyeballs removed?

A

Later, Lhalu and we were both large estate owners. We were separate, but actually we remained as one family. We had a document to prove this. There was a major document proving that the 2 families were joint.

When the trouble started, luckily they were able to destroy this particular document. So they said Lhalu and we are separate families and have nothing to do with each other. As a result, the Lhalu family was not harmed. Then Lhalu lhajam, although she was not our real mother, she was like a real mother to us and she tried her best for us through every means. She was able to get my father released from jail and he lived about 2-3 years after being released from jail.

Q

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Did he stay in the Lhalu House?

A

Yes, and he also stayed in our house. At that time we were sort of grown up and I watched what he was doing. He would get up at dawn and have his meals on time. He would have his lunch at 2 p.m. and have a soup at 4 p.m. and that's all. Then he would not eat at all.

Q

Both of his eyes were gouged out, right?

A

Yes. At that time they discussed whether to kill him or not. They said that it will be nothing if we just demote him and confiscated his property since one day he will stand up again because this person is knowledgeable and qualified for everything. However, if we kill him, he might be born as a very cruel ghost, and he will cause us to be unsafe. So we should make him become harmless/useless [tib. phan ma thogs pa], and they did that.

Q

When your father was released, what did he tell you?

A

Only when we asked him did he say something. Otherwise, he spent most of his time doing his prayers. Even at that time, many people were coming to seek his advice. Sawang Ragashag [tib. rags kha shag] came many times.

Q

Ragashag must have been closely associated with you because he was one of the 25 who got punished, right?

A

Gajang Tenpa also came often.

Q

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Gajang Tenpa was also one of those who received punishment, but none of them received corporal punishment, right?

A

Yes. He was exiled, but then came back and he used to come very often to our house. So our family's senior nyerpa used to say, it is dangerous again if this fellow comes very often to our master as this man was considered to be someone who could not learn any lesson so talking to such a person was pointless. So it was better [he said] that you persuade your father not to entertain this man at all. So, accordingly, one day I told my father that though I am a child and have no experience in politics whatsoever, but it has been observed by us now that this fellow is coming very often to you and people consider him as one of the trouble makers. So it will not be good to discuss anything with him now. If you give us any advise on this we will accept it not only as our parents' advice but as extraordinary parents' advice and we will keep it in our hearts. He then told me that we have been discussing nothing and he accepted our request. Later at about that time, Gajang Tenpa had some trouble somewhere else. I do not know what that was because I did not pay attention to it.

Q

Later, how did he die?

A

He died naturally in our own house.

Q

What was the cause of death and what was the illness?

A

There was no illness. He later was a highly developed spiritual personality.

Q

Other than being blind, did he have any illness at all?

A

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He had no other illnesses at all. He said that it was his karma that he got blind. My father told me that when he was young, he threw a sling-shot and it hit one of the sheep and tore out his eyeball. That must have been my karma, he said. Whatever it was, he considered it as his karma. He advised us always that if you become a government official you might also face such problems. His eldest son, Tsewang Dorje [tib. tshe dbang rdo rje], was also very young. However, if you become a government official, do not keep in mind what had happened to your father because we are old people and we did not agree with each other on political points. This was our problem, and you children should not involve yourselves in it. My advice for reforms was not acceptable to them, because their understanding was so limited. There were very few people who could digest my advice. So this situation developed. But our blood is Tibetan. Tibet and Tibetans should not be forgotten even if you become the king of the world. Even if you become a highly spiritual person and can sit cross legged in the air, you should not forget Tibet and Tibetans. So your own country and your own nation is very important. Simultaneously, dharma is the most important thing and one should not go against the dharma. Your father faced such problems, but you should never think of taking revenge for their deeds by different methods. So one should never do anything. This was my father's advice. However, the downfall of the Kapshöba from the position of Shape was done by my elder brother who was the mayor of Lhasa.

Q

Which one? Which became the mayor of Lhasa?

A

At that time, I was posted in Chamdo.

Q

How did he do it?

A

It was an opportunity that arose that we could take advantage of. One day it happened. Somehow some rumors developed and people started closing the shutters of their shops in the Ontöshinga [tib. 'ong stod zhing kha] Market and closing the doors of their houses. Someone was supposed to have said that there was a war coming. The mayor (mipön) immediately swung into action and started investigating who was the one spreading this

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rumor. They caught one man, and while he was being questioned through whipping, he admitted he had been sent by Kapshöba. My brother then immediately bypassed the Kashag and reported the matter directly to the Regent, Taktra. A commission of enquiry was set up consisting of the Trungtsi plus the 2 mayors of the city. As far as we were concerned, we had gotten the opportunity to retaliate.

Q

Why did Kapshöba send the man that day? Did he really send him?

A

As far as I am concerned, I am confident that Kapshöba was on the payroll of the old Chinese Government, but I have no proof to give. It is just my suspicion. Since he himself was the senior Shape, he should not have indulged in such an act because it was dangerous. But later something came out of his explanation to the Investigation Committee so he was jailed in solitary confinement for rest of his life. However, later when 14th Dalai Lama came to power, he was released again, but he stayed in jail until then.

One thing I forgot to mention before is that the reason why my father was sent abroad to many foreign countries was to publicize the independent status of Tibet. At that time, although the British Government could not stop him from making contact with other countries and allied nations, they did not want him to make contact with the Germans because at that time the British and Germans were not on good terms. At that time, quite a lot of things should have been done to make our country formidable. Such political matters needed to be done continuously, but they were not continued. For instance, a country like India was administered and strengthened by the people from generation to generation. And even at the present time, if someone works sincerely, things do not work out very smoothly for him. Such things seem to have been happening everywhere.

Q

Did your brothers and other family members know that the Regent, Reting Rinpoche, has not been fair to your father?

A

We knew that a long time back. But later Reting Rinpoche used to be good to me when he resigned from the regency. But during his regency, there was no such relationship.

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After his resignation from the regency, my elder brother and I went to see him and asked him to do us a favor and see Taktra on our behalf. At that time he agreed to do it for us. Reting Rinpoche had great faith and interest in the Gesar Epic and I too had interest in the Gesar Epic story.

Q

Is it true that your father adhered to Gesar?

A

Maybe to some extent, but at the moment I have not touched on the topic of religion.

Q

In the verdict against your father, one of the charges against your father was that he practiced black magic [tib. ngan gtad]. Was that true? It was further said that certain magic words like, Hit [tib. rgyobs] Trimön Norbu Wangyal [tib. khro smon nor bu dbang rgyal] etc. were used. Is that true?

A

The word 'was not "hit" but "press down/suppress" [tib. non].

Q

It was also said that one piece of paper was found in his shoe and another one he swallowed.

A

Such was the talk at that time, but I do not know how true they are. Later, I asked Kharak Yongdzin Rinpoche [tib. mka' rag yongs 'dzin rin po che] about it. He told me that from the practical point of view there was no reason for that. It was said that that practice was done to gain victory in debates.

Q

I heard that your father performed tra [tib. pra] [a kind of divination through mirrors] and in that divination he saw a tiger and a snake. Could you explain about that?

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A

That was true. Regarding this tra, there are many things to be explained, but that is the religious aspect which I have not touched as yet. My father was exactly perfect and excellent in this tra divination. However, it was his own karma that he could not divine accurately for himself. When we asked him what he saw in the tra, he told us that he saw letters in the tra that said, "Kapshöba Chögyal Nyima is instigating and creating trouble." [tib. chos rgyal nyi ma 'phung gzhi sde dkrug bzo gi 'dug] This divination he read through letters which appeared on the mirror. The divination further revealed, "Gyenkar Nangpa Penjor Dorje is leaking inner secrets." [tib. rgyal mkhar nang pa dpal 'byor rdo rje nang gtam phyi skyel byed kyi 'dug]. And Lungsharwa Dorje Tshegyal must escape to some other place. [tib. lung shar ba rdo rje tshe rgyal gnas 'dir ma sdod gzhan du byol]. Then 13 white men appeared and they showed him a sign how to avoid/escape [tib. gyol]. So this was what he saw in the divination. The 13 white men must be the Yerma [a fierce deity] revealing the future to him. Also during a previous tra, it said, "You should maintain cordial relation with Tri Den" [tib. khri gdan gsum la bstun mkhas byed] [Tri refers to Trimön and Den refers to the 3 monastic seats].

Q

Was it yigtra [tib. yig pra] [the tra divination in which prophecies are revealed through letters]?

A

It was both yigtra and sugtra [tib. gzugs pra] [where you see images], but mostly it was yigtra. But as in human life, in times of misfortune such things like the prediction referring to Trimön and the 3 monasteries happened, but were misunderstood by my father. Tri Rinpoche [tib. khri rin po che] had no power, but such was his misunderstanding of the prediction. At that time my father had a thanka of the protector deity Tsimara [tib. rtsi dnamr ba] the silk cover of which would open by itself. Regarding the tra divination, there are many interesting stories that I will tell you later.

Q

Was Kyabje Yongdzin Rinpoche [tib. skyabs rje yongs 'dzin rin po che] your father's guru?

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A

I do not think he was my father's Guru. He was very close to Trimön. In fact, they were like 2 souls in one body. Shakabpa knows more about this. The tra divinations of my father were not ordinary ones but were extraordinary. They were clear and accurate. However, after the demise of 13th Dalai Lama, all the plans made by my father were shattered. Otherwise, if he had taken the post of silön, he could have appointed anybody below him according to his own choice. Moreover, it would have been very easy for him to bring about any changes he wanted to make. He had power, talent and education. As far as his political acumen was concerned, it was matchless. Later, my elder brother and Ramba Sawangchemmo had some debates on this point.

Q

How did that happen?

A

Is there any relevance of this to our present topic?

Q

Please tell me about that since we were very young at that time and we do not know anything about those events. Otherwise, we will become ignorant about our own history in the future.

A

That was not very important. If you have any questions about my father, I am ready to tell you.

Q

According to my observations, Lungshar had no ambitions for higher posts, since he could have gotten it because he had enjoyed the full support of the 13th Dalai Lama. On the other hand, he had great interest in a democratic system, so in order to establish this democratic system, he must have power and position through which to execute his plans. This we can very easily learn from the history of other countries. Unless a person in high power and position takes responsibility, it is very difficult to achieve the goal. From another

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point, unless he himself was in the Tsondu, it was difficult for him to make his moves. I think that was the main reason. Is that true?

A

Yes, that is true. The main reason was that unless he was in the Tsondu, he could not bring about the changes.

Q

How can you explain that?

A

I cannot explain it, but that was the main reason.

Q

Although the Tsondu was the highest and most powerful authority, under certain circumstances the Tsondu became a scapegoat to the Kashag and the Trungtsi, right.

A

That is true. Although the judgment was passed with the approval and amendments made by Kashag, Trungtsi and the Dalai Lama, the main decision had already been made.

Q

How was this done? Quite often it happened that certain decisions made by the Tsondu were further amended by the Kashag by attaching notes called jaryig [tib. sbyar yig] to the document. This was done quite often.

A

Yes, such things were done. But I cannot tell for certain how it was done.

Q

The Regent also made changes to the decisions reached by the Tsondu, right?

A

That is true, but this could not be done to the decisions made by the Tsondu gyendzom.

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Q

No. It was not the Tsondu gyendzom, but the Tsondu hragdu [that decided].

A

The amendments were made to the decisions of the Tsondu hragdu, not the Tsondu gyendzom.

Q

Did the report of a decision made by the Tsondu gyendzom have to be sent to Kashag for its approval?

A

Although the reports were sent to Kashag, the decisions were made before sending it there.

Q

Could the Kashag make changes on the decisions made by the Tsondu?

A

Leave aside the Kashag, even the Dalai Lama could not make any changes.

Q

But couldn't they attach a jaryig on the Tsondu's decisions?

A

I don't know.